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The above is taken from our new booklet GOLDEN DUST FOR HOUSEWORK. Send for it free.

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## CLIMAX.

Dead at the climax? No, dear, love, Mountain in trip to heaven? No, dear, love, So fast the path leads to the gate? No, dear, love, Now, while the stars are in the gates, Dead at the climax? No, dear, love, His heart's blood is in the gate, An earthly's blood is in the gate, And dear, love, with blood, stand through gates.

## MR. ODDIE'S COURTSHIP.

He Was a Model Bachelor, but He's a Good Man, Too.

By Sheila E. Braine

Mr. Markham Oddie was a model bachelor, an old bachelor and a heart whole man—that is to say, he was all three until the day, considerably past his fortieth birthday, that a special fate took him in hand and brought him face to face with the younger of two ladies who had recently come to live in one of the houses opposite.

They were evidently mother and daughter. Both were comely, and the last named of the two had one of the sweetest faces it had ever been Mr. Oddie's luck to behold. She happened to drop a small parcel while walking along their mutual road, and he hurried after her with it. The smile with which she received it went straight through Mr. Oddie's somewhat antiquated waistcoat.

All the evening he thought of that smile. When he went to bed, he endeavored, with the aid of three candles, to get an impartial view of that region on the top of his head where the hair ought to have been, but now, alas, was not. That bald spot had not troubled him much up to that time. Now he regarded it with mistrust.

Mr. Oddie had led an amiable, punctual, uneventful existence, going to and returning from the city every week day with regularity and dispatch—the kind of person who is never asked for his season ticket. He was comfortably off and had no one dependent upon him. The few relatives he possessed lived in the shires.

Mr. Oddie had remained a bachelor all these years possibly because nobody had set to work to marry him. It was not that he objected to women. On the contrary, he admired the fair sex, as a whole, quite unreservedly. But he had never given his heart to any one particular woman, and his landlady looked upon him as a fixture.

The returning of that apparently innocent looking parcel marked an epoch. Life was never the same again to the little old bachelor. He had not watched Miss Hexham's gentle face and well-developed but graceful figure for ten days before he became convinced that it was not good for a corn dealer to live alone.

"A man wanted softening influences about him"—here he hurled a piece of fried ham to the cat—"he needed a gentle hand to guide and restrain him." Mr. Oddie at this point discovered that he had forgotten to wind his watch up the night before.

The truth was he was in love and with a young woman with whom he had never exchanged a syllable. He learned her name from his landlady, an austere person, whose mind was set upon a curious form of religion and who did not take much thought about frivolous worldly matters.

Questioned discreetly by her lodger, this worthy but depressing person could tell him little regarding the two ladies who were now the objects of such tender interest to him. They were a Mrs. and Miss Hexham, so she had heard, and Mrs. Hexham was either deaf or dumb, or it might be both, for her daughter talked on her fingers to her, and she answered back in the same way.

Mr. Oddie's courtship was a very decorous affair. In Spain, despite his years, he would doubtless have adopted the role of an "iron eater," as the youth who goes courting under his ladylove's balcony is styled.

But in sober, unromantic England

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the suitor does not eat iron or serene the queen of his heart on the guitar. He has to be properly introduced, and the little corn dealer, knowing this respectable custom, would have given anything for an introduction which would have allowed him to call and establish friendly relations.

The months passed, and still he could not get that thin but necessary end of the wedge in. The mother and daughter seemed to have very few friends and never went out, probably on account of Mrs. Hexham's affliction. It was hard upon the daughter, Mr. Oddie thought, but he admired her all the more for her self sacrifice.

Miss Hexham became aware of his devotion, of that Mr. Oddie was convinced. When they met—and he took care that they did meet pretty often—he ventured to raise his hat, and smiles were exchanged. But there the affair halted, to the poor little man's frequent despair. He could get no "for-rader."

Once, when he attempted to speak, Miss Hexham turned the color of a red rose and promptly hurried away. "I have never been properly introduced, that is why," was Mr. Oddie's anguished reflection. "She must have been exquisitely brought up, the very pink of propriety."

"Something will have to be done," cried the poor man desperately on the day that he went to the city without a tie, and an unfeeling acquaintance jeered at him and inquired if his liver were out of order. His liver! Perish the thought! It was his heart.

He decided at length that, like Hezekiah, he would ask for a sign from heaven. He would send the object of his adoration a bouquet, an anonymous bouquet of the choicest. She would surely guess from whom it came. If she placed it in the window, he would write to Mrs. Hexham, explain himself and his intentions and request permission to call.

Mr. Oddie took a holiday the day the bouquet was sent off from Covent Garden. To sit still in his office was a thing impossible. He went for a long walk, but where his next little legs took him he was never able to say.

The next day the agony increased. There was no sign. Mr. Oddie fell plump into the depths of despair and was convinced that he had offended his ladylove. He had not been properly introduced. The phrase became a perfect nightmare to him.

But the second day there was the bouquet in the window in all its glory, and, moreover, Miss Hexham was bending over it, inhaling its perfume. She was a beautiful woman, not too young for a man whom—in his prime, the wonder was that such a treasure had not been snatched up before.

Markham Oddie wrote to Mrs. Hexham. It took him hours and hours to compose the letter, and it was the most deliciously old-fashioned epistle ever penned in a practical century. Two whole days elapsed before a little note came in reply.

"Mrs. Hexham presents her compliments to Mr. Markham Oddie and would be pleased to see him if he could make it convenient to call this evening between 8 and 9 o'clock."

The note was a formal one, but when the excited little old bachelor was shown into the sitting room at Helmswood Mrs. Hexham, who was alone, received him with a very kindly smile. Her eyes looked as if she had been crying.

"Please take a seat," she said. "It has been very close all day, has it not?" "Terribly," answered the visitor. "Do you feel the heat much?"

"Yes, I am afraid I do," was the reply, and Mr. Oddie suddenly recollected that his future mother-in-law was said to be deaf and dumb. This lady was certainly neither.

"My daughter," said Mrs. Hexham after a pause, "desired me to tell you how very, very grateful she is to you for your letter and the flowers. She has gone away for a short time to stay with friends. She—she thought it best."

Mr. Oddie sat there, unable to utter a word. "She had gone away because she thought it best." That meant that there was no hope for him.

Mrs. Hexham's eyes filled with tears as she looked at him. "Oh," she cried, "I am so sorry—so very sorry! You are such a good, kind hearted man, I am sure. Of course you did not know or you would not have thought of it."

"Thought of what?" asked Mr. Oddie heavily. "Of marrying my poor Agatha. You

## Medical Society, Attention.

There will be a regular meeting of the Pensacola Medical Society at the Board of Health office at 7 o'clock p. m. Tuesday, Feb. 13 and 27. Visiting physicians are cordially invited to attend.

D. W. McMillan, M. D., President

E. F. Bruce, M. D., Secretary. 25mt

did not know that she is deaf and dumb?"

Mr. Oddie stared at the speaker in blank amazement. It was fully a minute before he grasped the significance of what she was saying. It was the daughter, not the mother, who was "deaf and dumb," as Mrs. Roper would have phrased it. He was silent, and Mrs. Hexham continued:

"My poor girl is very sensitive, and your kindness went to her heart. I can assure you."

Mr. Oddie pulled himself together and rose to his feet. At this moment there was something almost noble about his rather tubby little figure.

"Madam," he said firmly, "your daughter is an angel, and I love her. Will you have the goodness to give me her address—that is, if you will sanction my asking her to do me the honor to be my wife?"

"It seems rather unconventional," she said, "but it is not exactly an ordinary case, is it? And I am sure you are a good man. Mr. Sedley, the vicar, was talking about you only the other day and saying how charitable you were. Agatha has the sweetest disposition and she is so quick you hardly realize that she is not like other people. Indeed, I think you would be very happy together."

"I think we three would be very happy together," answered Mr. Oddie, emphasizing the "three." He took the vicar's hand and kissed it with old-fashioned gallantry.

It is unnecessary to mention at what unearthly hour Mr. Oddie required his breakfast the next morning or to state that he hardly ate a mouthful of it.

In the afternoon of the same day Mrs. Hexham might have been seen reading a telegram with a beaming face. It was not a long one, for it contained only five words, "Love from Agatha and Markham"—Sketch.

## Bird Legends.

Owls never have been popular birds, and Pliny tells us that on two occasions a large owl having made its appearance in the streets of Rome a solemn ceremony was performed by the whole city in order to avert the catastrophe which was believed to be foreshadowed by visits from such uncanny birds. Savages have ever associated disaster with the appearance of an owl, a raven or a crow, while even the humble sparrow has excited distaste at times.

In folklore with birds, as with many other animals, not a few of the myths as to death or ill fortune are associated, and even in these advanced days there are many places where all hope of a sick person's recovery would be abandoned if it were known that a crow, a rook or a jackdaw had flown over the house wherein the person lay ill, a similar belief attaching to the appearance of a white plover and in the Orkneys to the ring ouzel.

## Feeding Wheat.

With the wheat market going from bad to worse talk of feeding this grain is again heard on all sides, says The National Stockman and Farmer. A few years ago a large quantity was fed because of an unsatisfactory market, and there are plenty of people who expect to utilize the experience gained then unless the price becomes more attractive. We do not anticipate that enough will be used this way to materially influence the market, nor do we believe this course is the most profitable, but many people think it is, and they base their ideas on their previous experience.

## Deep Freezing.

It has been assumed that the depth of unvarying temperature in the soil increases from one foot at the equator to seventy odd feet at the poles, yet a shaft in northern Siberia has reached a depth of 1,500 feet without getting through the frost. A western mining engineer explains that this may not disprove the theory, as the deep freezing may be a result of annual accumulations of sediment on unthawed ground.

## Big Things That Do Not Pay.

A big farm and a big mortgage are not necessary to profitable agricultural pursuits. "There is money in little things" is true of farms as well, especially if large ones can't be owned absolutely.—Farm Stock and Home.

Mrs. J. K. Miller, Newton Hamilton, Pa., writes, "I think DeWitt's Witch Hazel Salve the grandest salve made." It cures piles and heals everything. All fraudulent imitations are worthless. Hargis' Pharmacy, John Shepard, S. Kahn

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## CONFLICT IN MARTINIQUE.

Rioting Strikers Threaten the Lives of White Inhabitants.

PORT DE FRANCE, Island of Martinique, Feb. 12.—The white inhabitants of Le Francois, being threatened with death by the rioting strikers, have sought refuge here, the governor having declared it impossible to guarantee their lives.

The managers of the plantations are requesting permission to organize forces of military for the purpose of protecting the persons who are at work, but the governor will not accept the responsibility of authorizing such a step. A band of rioters last evening marched through Port de France without molestation shouting:

"Long live the negro race!" "down with the whites!" "down with the murderers!" "vengeance!"

Panics, pillage, murder and incendiarism were posted at Point-a-Petre.

## An Ingenious Theory, on Kipling.

A correspondent of the London Chronicle has evolved an ingenious theory to the effect that Kipling owes many of his literary mannerisms to a sporting paper called The Asian, which was published in Lahore when he was on The Civil and Military Gazette. This paper was wont to crib paragraphs by the wholesale from The Licensed Victuallers' Gazette. In the files of this for 1885 can be found many phrases peculiar to itself which Kipling has since made famous.

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